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Opening Remarks

Expanding Our Vision

As the Central New York winter drifts toward spring, many of us anxiously await the greening of the landscape. After what seem like endless days of staring at barren trees and slate-gray skies, we welcome the green like a long-lost friend returning to town.

But even the dreariest gray days reveal more than I often imagine, making this a time of discovery for me. Without the cover of greenery, new sights emerge: a secluded house on a hillside, a crumbling stone fence, a snow-fed stream. Many mornings on my drive to work I wonder how an old, rusted truck—camouflaged most of the year—ended up in a patch of woods I pass by. Years ago, I discovered a pileated woodpecker's roost that I would never have spotted in full foliage.

From my perspective, these new views, provided courtesy of the changing seasons, parallel new visions emerging from interdisciplinary collaboration here in the world of academia. We notice the usual, but often overlook the unusual. It's not intentional, either. Instead, it's just a matter of fixing our gaze on what's most recognizable and comfortable to us. The beauty of interdisciplinary work—or, crossing boundaries, as Chancellor Cantor often refers to it—is that it presents new possibilities to explore.

Everyone looks at things in different ways, so there's a benefit when people share their visions and expertise with one another. In this issue, for instance, you can read about how College of Law students and faculty have struck a partnership with pediatricians at University Hospital to provide legal resources to improve children's health (page 10). There's the Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism, a joint venture of the College of Law and the Maxwell School, which is training students to examine terrorism and related issues from legal and policymaking standpoints



(page 20). Another initiative brought together a music education class from the School of Education with sound experts at the Belfer Audio Laboratory and Archive, allowing class members to engineer lesson plans using historical recordings (page 12). These are just three examples of the numerous interdisciplinary efforts under way at the University.

Establishing such connections sparks innovation and leads to new territories. It allows faculty to broaden their views of their own disciplines by seeing how their specialized research connects with others' work. Through interdisciplinary study, students, as well as faculty, discover how linking thoughts and research from different fields can create a holistic approach to addressing a multitude of issues.

Interdependence in today's world requires us to wrestle with knowledge beyond our personal focus. The more we understand about interrelations among things, the more opportunities we'll have to improve our lives. Then we'll truly see the woodpecker's roost in the forest through the trees.

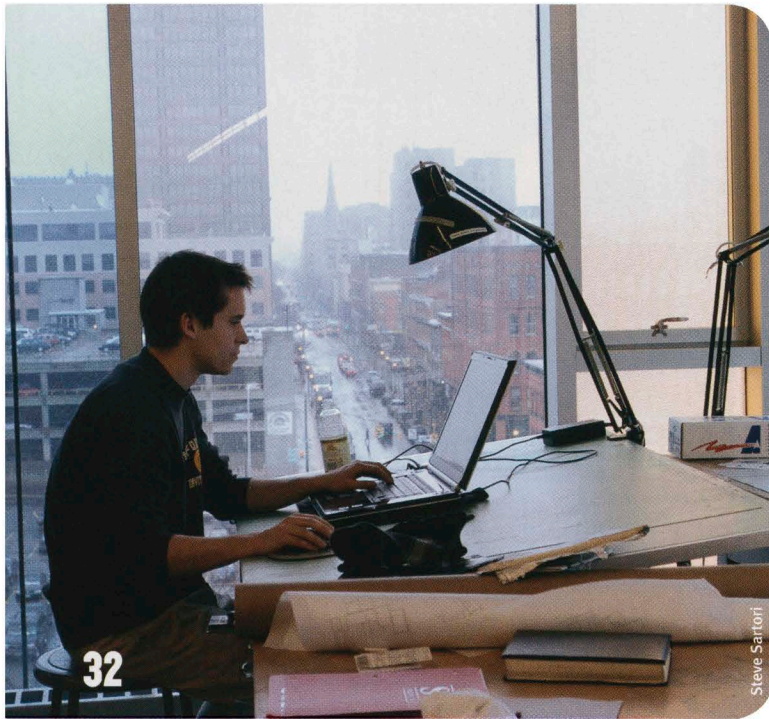
JAY COX
Editor

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